



Economic and Social Council

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Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues

Third session

New York, 10-21 May 2004

Agenda item 4 of the provisional agenda*

Mandated areas

Information received from non-governmental organizations

Note by the Secretariat

Addendum

American Psychological Association

* E/C.19/2004/1.



1. The American Psychological Association was honoured to support the first two Permanent Forums on Indigenous Issues in May 2002 and May 2003.
2. We were additionally pleased with the Permanent Forums' recognition of the mental health needs of children as described in the Outcome Document of the 2nd Permanent Forum.
3. Recognizing the importance of the Permanent Forums' decision to focus the third session on the issues facing Indigenous women, the American Psychological Association recommends the following actions for the six mandated areas of the Forum:

Economic and Social Development

4. Recognizing that poverty and lack of development negatively effect Indigenous women physically, psychologically, socially, and politically,

We urge Member States to collect and disseminate data on the income, employment status, government funded job training, and benefits of Indigenous women in their countries and (2) to support funds and programs that focus on economic empowerment and employment training for Indigenous women

We encourage UN agencies to determine the interaction between poverty and health care access of Indigenous women, including both physical and mental health care

We recommend Indigenous Peoples Organizations to dedicate resources to the employment and economic needs of Indigenous Women including women's business initiatives and collective banking associations

We invite Permanent Forum Members to note the serious consequences of poverty including exposure to violence, discrimination, depression, and substance abuse.

Environment

5. Taking into account the negative physical and mental health effects of environmental toxins,

We urge Member States to collect and disseminate data on the actions taken by the government to alleviate environmental toxins and to determine the physical and mental health consequences evidenced in Indigenous women who have been affected by environmental toxins

We encourage UN agencies to dedicate resources to the prevention of further harm to Indigenous women by environmental agents

We recommend Indigenous Peoples Organizations to research and educate Indigenous women about any environmental agencies that may have negative health consequences to them

We invite Permanent Forum Members to note the serious consequences of environmental agents, including depression and anxiety

Health

6. Recognizing the serious mental health issues facing Indigenous women coupled with the limited mental health resources made available to them,

We urge Member States to collect and disseminate data on the known prevalence of mental health issues facing Indigenous women, including post traumatic stress disorder, substance abuse, depression, anxiety,

and suicidality; in addition current mental health services utilized by Indigenous women should be determined.

We encourage UN agencies to dedicate resources to research on culturally effective treatment for Indigenous women with mental health concerns.

We recommend Indigenous Peoples Organizations to provide education to Indigenous women on mental health issues facing women including domestic violence, sexual assault, sexual harassment, and discrimination, as well as community resources available to assist women

We invite Permanent Forum Members to note that the pervasive problems of trafficking, poverty, and discrimination have negative effects on the mental health of Indigenous women

Human Rights

7. Being aware that violations of the human rights of Indigenous women results in physical, psychological, economic, and social consequences

We urge Member States to dedicate additional resources to the elimination of violence against women, both community violence and domestic violence.

We encourage UN agencies to dedicate resources to monitoring and penalizing those responsible for the trafficking of women

We recommend Indigenous Peoples Organizations to advocate for Indigenous women who are survivors of trafficking and violence.

We invite Permanent Forum Members to note the serious consequences of human rights violation on Indigenous women, including death, depression, and posttraumatic stress.

Culture

8. Taking into account the importance of cultural identity and preservation for positive mental health outcomes such as self esteem and self efficacy,

We urge Member States to document steps that they are taking to preserve and protect the culture of Indigenous women

We encourage UN agencies to monitor and fortify funds focused on the preservation of Indigenous women's cultural intellectual integrity, property, customs, art, and oral history.

We recommend Indigenous Peoples Organizations to dedicate resources to cultural education and awareness for Indigenous girls to preserve their sense of self-esteem and cultural esteem

We invite Permanent Forum Members to note the serious consequences of poverty including exposure to violence, discrimination, depression, and substance abuse.

Education

9. Being aware of the positive effects of education on Indigenous women including economic and social development, as well as physical and mental health,

We urge Member States to collect data on the literacy rates and programs for Indigenous women as well as to develop a five-year plan for improving the literacy rates of Indigenous women

We encourage UN agencies to research the physical, economic, psychological, and political benefits to individuals and communities, as the rates of literacy among Indigenous women increases

We recommend Indigenous Peoples Organizations to advocate for educational opportunities for Indigenous women

We invite Permanent Forum Members to note the role of educational access in the development and health of Indigenous women.

Summary

Economic development, social development, education, cultural preservation, safe environments, protection of human rights, and physical and mental health care access are key to safeguarding the lives of Indigenous women.